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ABSTRACT

This Kids Count report examines statewide trends in the well-being of North Carolina's children. The statistical portrait is based on 16 indicators of well-being: (1) infant mortality rate; (2) infants born with low birth weight; (3) births to single teens; (4) children without insurance; (5) ninth graders who graduate; (6) high school dropout rate; (7) SAT scores; (8) child abuse and neglect; (9) children in out-of-home placements; (10) juvenile arrest rate; (11) training school commitments; (12) child deaths; (13) children living in poverty; (14) median family income; (15) children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children; and (16) child support collections. The bulk of the report is comprised of statewide summaries of findings. Findings indicate that the infant mortality rate dropped in 1992 to 9.9, the lowest in state history. Births to single teens decreased slightly in 1992 and had been level over the preceding 5 years. The proportion of infants born at low birth weight had not declined in the last 15 years, and remained at eight percent. The school dropout rate worsened by 10 percent after several years of progress. The high school graduation rate dropped seven percent since 1986. Child abuse report have nearly doubled since 1989. The number of child support cases increased and the number of children living in poverty increased. The report also tabulates county data on 14 of the indicators. The report concludes with information on data definitions and sources and 5-year trend information on the indicators. (KB)

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Children's Index

A Profile of Leading Indicators on the Health & Well-Being of North Carolina's Children.

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NORTH CAROLINA child ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

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The mission of the
North Carolina Child Advocacy Institute
is to promote the well-being of
the children and families
of North Carolina by identifying needs
and mobilizing public and private
resources to meet those needs.

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Children's Index 1994

Each day in North Carolina

3 babies die...

88 children are abused

or neglected...

43 families are started

by teens...

40 teenagers drop out

of high school...

1994

Overview

North Carolina has 1,606,149 children under the age of 18. One in three is minority, one in five lives in poverty, one in four lives in a single-parent family, and two of three have both parents or their only parent working.

1994 Index at a Glance

Better Worse	Index 93	Index 94	Change
Health			
Infant Mortality per 1,000	10.9	9.9	-9.2%
Low Birth Weight	8.4%	8.4%	0
Births To Single Teens	11.1%	10.7%	-3.6%
Children Without Insurance	13.5%	17.3%	+28.1%
Education			
Ninth Graders Who Graduate	67%	65.6%	-2.1%
High School Dropout Rate per 1,000	2.77	3.06	+10.5%
SAT Scores	855	859	+0.5%
Safety			
Children Reported Abused/Neglected	76,616	94,475	+23.3%
Children In Out-Of-Home Placement	5,469	5,806	+6.2%
Juvenile Arrest Rate per 1,000	9.02	9.70	+7.5%
Training School Commitments	887	832	-6.2%
Child Deaths	1,983	1,883	-5%
Security			
Children Living In Poverty	275,517*	320,101	+16.2%
Median Family Income	$31,343*	$35,200	+12.3%
Children Receiving AFDC	200,700	220,835	+10%
Child Support Collections**	$321.5	$347.1	+8%

*1991 estimates
** in millions

This seventh edition of the *Children's Index*, the first report of its kind in the nation, provides a barometer reading on the health and well-being of children and families in North Carolina. There are areas of steady improvement, but overall the Index paints a disturbing portrait of life for children and families in our state. There is more bad news than good.

The 1994 KIDS COUNT national ranking, using 1991 data, puts our state 40th. That means we are among the 10 worst states in the nation for children and families to live. We have never rated higher than 39th since the ranking began four years ago.

Amongst the quiet gray rows of statistics in this report are beacons of brilliance and potholes of pestilence. We have reached the lowest infant mortality rate in our state's history, and child support collections continue to climb, lifting many children out of poverty. The education gains of the last few years, while faltering in some areas, are largely being maintained.

But poverty, that slayer of dreams and destroyer of childhoods, affected more than 320,000 children last year, 16% more than the year before. Families were forced onto the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) rolls in droves, adding more than 100,000 children to the welfare ranks.

As families lost jobs, they also lost health insurance for their children. Almost one in five children in our state – more than a quarter million – did not have Medicaid or any other health insurance coverage last year. The number of children uninsured rose 28%.

Child abuse reports soared to almost 100,000, a 23% increase in one year and a 100% increase since 1989. Inevitably, out-of-home placements also began to creep up. Juvenile arrests increased seven percent, continuing a steady rise that amounts to 18% over the past five years.

The mythical statistician with one leg in the freezer and the other in the oven felt obliged to report that "on average" he was doing fine, when in fact he was in considerable pain. Similarly, the averages cited in this report mask grim inequities. Infant mortality, for example, is twice as great among minority children. Poor children are twice as likely to die from all causes as other children. In some counties, 10% of the children are poor; in others, 40%. In Tyrrell County, the child abuse rate is four per 1,000; in Rutherford, it is 127. Furthermore, almost every county has at least one indicator worse than the state average.

Nonetheless, in 1993 North Carolina began some efforts to improve conditions for children and families that will pay dividends in later years. These include the Smart Start quality preschool program initiated by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., the vaccine purchase program providing immunizations for all children, requirements for the safe storage of weapons, and improved standards for child care. Also, the new federal administration weighed in with medical and family leave, expansion of the earned income tax credit for low-income working parents, immunization funding, the family preservation act, and a waiting period requirement for handgun purchases.

What Can We Do?

The Institute recommends three courses of action for North Carolina.

- Invest in successful family-friendly and community-based programs that have proven to work in empowering families to become self-sufficient and child-nurturing. There is abundant research that confirms that quality preschool, home visits, and family preservation programs work. Better jobs that raise family incomes are another proven way to strengthen families.

- Target funding to communities and counties that have the most severe problems. State policies that distribute funds equally among all counties (the time-honored "put the money on the stump and run" formula) spare policymakers the agony of making judgements, but fail to make an impact because of limited funding.

- Make the effort early, when it is both cheaper to help and also more effective. The teen crime rate of today reflects our failures a decade ago to provide basic help for families and decent opportunities for children to grow and develop. Today we reap the grim harvest we planted earlier with our legacy of corporal punishment in schools, low-quality child care, poor health services for children, and lack of attention to foster care and child abuse.

The *1994 Children's Index* is a wake-up call to us all. We now have charted the dimensions of the problems facing children and families in our state, and we are responsible for what we know. We urge you to use this Index to "make kids count" in North Carolina. Kids count, and they are counting on us.

In Acknowledgement

The 1994 Children's Index is an occasion for both pride and sadness. Pride because this report has become a model for many other states. Thanks to funding from the KIDS COUNT project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, every state now issues an annual report like our *Children's Index*. Sadness because the staff person who made that vision a reality and produced the Index for seven years is no longer at the Institute. Michele Rivest made the Index a reliable yardstick for public officials, news media, agency heads, citizen leaders, proposal writers, and plain old policy wonks. Michele left the Institute earlier this year to head the Smart Start early childhood team in Orange County. This edition of the *Children's Index* is dedicated to Michele.

This report is made possible by a grant from the Blumenthal Foundation of Charlotte and the Annie E. Casey Foundation of Greenwich, Connecticut. We thank them for supporting our efforts to encourage public awareness and accountability for the status of children. We are pleased to be a part of the Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT project. Other foundations who provided support for production and dissemination of the Index are the AJ Fletcher Foundation and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

Our appreciation is extended to all the many state agency staff who provided the statistics and analyses that made this report possible. They include the following:

From the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources – Delton Atkinson, State Center for Health and Environmental Statistics Director; Dr. Kevin Ryan, Women's Health Section Head; Thomas J. Vitaglione, Children and Youth Section Head; Dr. Ron Levine, State Health Director; Wayne Bobbitt, HIV/STD Control Branch Head; Barbara Laymon, Infant Immunization Coordinator.

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John S. Niblock is the author of this report. Other Institute staff who especially contributed were Annette Phillips, who tenaciously collected the data from state agencies; and consultant Judith Auman, who helped organize the material and conducted some of the statistical compilations. Also, we thank OPUS I, Inc., for the creative design and production of this report, and Phyllis Barbour for the report's illustrations.

Finally, we thank Dr. Yevonne Brannon and Rick Shields at the NC State University Center for Urban Affairs and Services for their guidance on data selection, for verifying the data, and producing the ratings and rankings.

NC Compared to the Nation

Overall Rank: 40th*

Indicator	NC	Nat'l	Rank*
% Low Birth Weight Babies	8.4%	7.1%	44
Infant Mortality Rate	10.8	8.9	45
Child Death Rate Ages 1-14 per 100,000 children	35.7	30.7	44
% Births To Single Teens	11.5%	9%	43
Juvenile Violent Crime Arrest Rate Ages 10-17 per 100,000 youths	379	457	36
% Graduating High School On Time	67.3%	68.8%	39
% Teens Not In School & Not Working Ages 16-19	4.8%	5%	26
Teen Violent Death Rate Ages 15-19 per 100,000 teens	72.3	71.1	28
% Children in Poverty	18.9%	20%	30
% Children in Single-Parent Families	26.1%	25.1%	37

NOTE: All data except Infant Mortality are from 1991; Infant Mortality is the average for 1989-1993. Source: 1994 National KIDS COUNT Databook. *51 = worst

The Vision

All children v

grow up heal

and affo dable health care.

All children will receive adequate

nutrition and recreation to develop

healthful lifestyles.

1994

Health

The Best & Worst

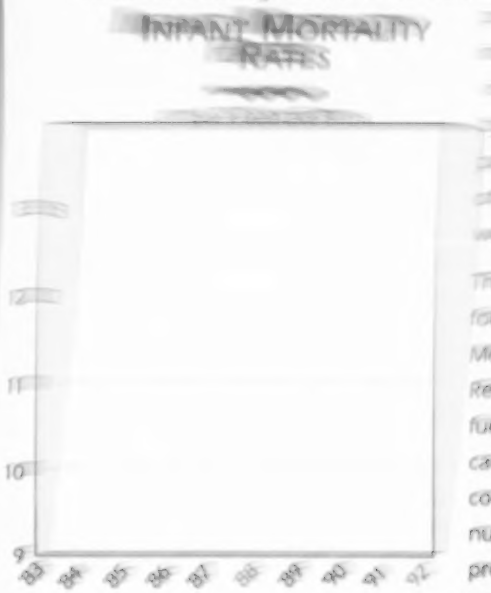
	Low Birth Weight	Infant Mortality	Teen Births
Best	Clay Graham Alexander Tyrrell Avery Jackson	Alleghany Camden Clay Hyde Jones Pamlico	Alleghany Camden Orange Dare Onslow
Worst	Anson Hertford Hoke Cumberland Edgecombe	Swain Hoke Graham Cumberland Anson	Hertford Edgecombe Scotland Graham Robeson Bertie

Worse Better

Infant Mortality

North Carolina's infant mortality rate, the proportion of all babies born who die before their first birthday, dropped in 1992 to 9.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, the lowest in the state's history. There was a slight setback in 1991 (but then a nine percent improvement in 1992. For the period 1985/91, the state ranked 45th in the nation. Although the improvement is welcome, it is mainly among white infants, where the rate dropped 23%. The rate for minorities improved (15.7) but remains at more than twice the white rate (7.2).

The percentage of all mothers who began their prenatal health care during the first three months of their pregnancies increased slightly in 1992, falling for almost four years in a row. The legislature's four-year Infant Mortality Reduction Plan funded maternity care coordinators, nutrition programs, and other measures. Also, the Baby Love outreach program helps low-income pregnant women get prenatal care through Medicaid. Since 1988, the state's infant mortality rate has dropped 21%.



County Findings

Mortality rates in 1992 ranged from 0 in Alleghany, Camden, Clay, Hyde, Jones, and Pamlico to a high of 28 deaths per 1,000 births in Swain. Forty-eight counties exceeded the state average of 9.9, and 10 were more than double the state rate. These counties tend to be located in the Southeast and Northeast regions (see chart p. 22). Note: Single year data can be misleading because wide fluctuations can occur from year to year due to the small number of births in some counties.

Children Without Insurance

Children without health insurance may be forced to wait for attention until a minor infection becomes a full-blown emergency. They may have to depend on the kindness of strangers in white coats in hospital emergency rooms because they cannot afford regular care from a doctor who knows their name and medical history.

The Southern Institute on Children and Families in Columbia, SC, estimates that 278,000 children in North Carolina, 17% of the state's children, don't have health insurance. For preschoolers, the problem is worse: one in five – 106,000 children five and under, don't have insurance. In addition, those who have insurance may not be fully covered. A recent study indicates only half of the conventional health insurance policies cover well-baby care. The recent economic recession and corporate downsizing has led to a [illegible] in the number of [illegible] children.

[illegible] Child Care for Working Families Act to provide [illegible] children under the age of 5 whose parents make the federal poverty level ($13,350 for a family of four in 1993). Children over nine are eligible if family income is less than 44% of poverty. Medicaid served 240,000 children in 1995, reaching three of every four poor children in the state, according to the Division of Medical Assistance.

Often the lack of health services is as big a problem as money to pay for them. Many rural areas do not have pediatricians or family doctors. Because of the newly enacted family and medical leave act more working parents will be able to take their children to receive medical care. Although children represent 44% of all the people eligible for Medicaid, they receive only 12% of Medicaid spending. The elderly represent 30%, but receive 73% of Medicaid spending.

Lack of immunizations is a problem for preschoolers. Only 57% of two-year-olds are properly immunized. Federal and state governments took action on this problem in 1993 with funding to provide vaccines free of charge. The 1993 legislature earmarked $11 million over two years for vaccine purchase. A statewide immunization campaign funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was launched in April. Federal health care reform looms large and a state commission charged with developing a plan for North Carolina got under way early in 1994.

Births To Single Teens

A teenage girl who becomes pregnant all too often enters a cycle of school failure, poverty and delinquency that restricts her opportunities in life. Births to single teens decreased slightly in 1992, by four percent, and have been level over the past five years. The national KIDS COUNT project ranked North Carolina 43rd in the nation in percent of births to single teens in 1991.

In 1992, there were 103,925 babies born. About 16,000 of these (15%) were born to mothers age 10 to 19. Of these, more than 11,000, or 11% of all births, were to single teens. Among all the first births in the state, 27% were to teens. The higher health risks associated with teen pregnancy are shown in the 948 fetal deaths to teens which comprised 20% of all fetal deaths in the state.

The costs of teen pregnancy are great for the girl, her child, and the community. Babies born to teenagers are [illegible] and are more likely to be born prematurely, to suffer from malnutrition, and to become victims of child abuse and neglect. Children of teens are more likely to [illegible] and to become teen parents themselves. Teen parents fail to finish school and are more likely to [illegible] and to become unemployed.

In 1992, North Carolina spent almost $469 million in state and federal funds to provide AFDC, Medicaid, and food stamps to teen parents and their families. The Division of Health Statistics estimates that the state spends one dollar to support families started by teens for every penny it spends to prevent unintended pregnancies among teens.

Since 1985, state funds have supported innovative community programs on adolescent pregnancy prevention. In 1993 the state received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to develop school health services.

County Findings

Counties ranged from a high of 22.9% of all births to single teens in Hertford County to a low of 3.4% in Alleghany. Fifty-two counties exceeded the state average of 10.7% of state births. Three-fourths of the counties with high rates of children in poverty also had high rates of births to single teens (see chart p. 22).

Low Birth Weight

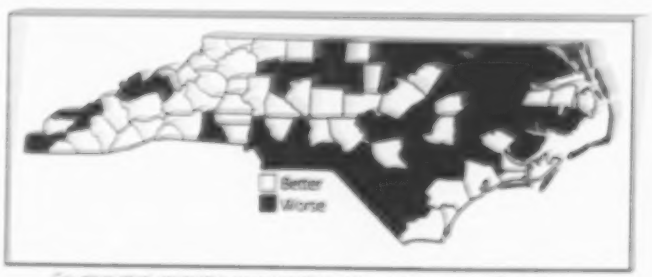
9

Babies born weighing five and one-half pounds or less are termed low birth-weight babies. They are 40 times more likely to die in the first month of life and five times more likely to die before their first birthday than other babies. Many of these infants require intensive, high-technology hospital care immediately after birth, often for as long as two to three months.

A Charlotte hospital reports its average cost for one 12-week premature baby without complications at $96,940; for a 14-week premature baby, it rises to $130,150. In one recent year in North Carolina, 1,081 very low birth-weight babies (less than 3.5 pounds) cost $33.5 million for intensive care during their first month of life alone.

In 1992, the proportion of babies born at low birth weight remained about the same as in 1991 (8.6 percent). This is a decline from the 1980's, when the proportion of babies born at low birth weight increased. The reasons for the increase are complex. Alcohol and tobacco use, and poor nutrition all increase the risk of low birth weight.

Studies show that use of prenatal care also can provide access to related services such as nutrition, family planning, and well-child care, leading to more live births and fewer low birth-weight babies.



Counties that are better or worse than state average on Low Birth Weight

County Findings

County low birth-weight rates ranged from a low of three percent of all births in Clay to a high of almost 16% in Anson.

Most of the 50 counties with low birth-weight rates higher than the state average also had infant mortality rates higher than the state average (see chart p. 22).

The Vision

All children will have the care and support they need to enter school ready to learn. All children will receive a quality, comprehensive education that ensures their ability to develop into young adults who are literate, skilled, knowledgeable and socially responsible.

Education

Despite progress in test scores, the state remains far below the national average.

THE BEST & WORST

	DROPOUT RATE	SAT SCORES	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
Best	Camden		
	Tyrrell	Watauga	Camden
	Hyde	Orange	Tyrrell
	Gates	Wake	Haywood
	Chowan	Yancey	Gates
	Clay	Henderson	Davie
Worst	Caldwell	Northampton	Polk
	Wilkes	Hertford	Scotland
	Mecklenburg	Anson	Caldwell
	Warren	Robeson	Bertie
	Alamance	Martin	Northampton
			Warren

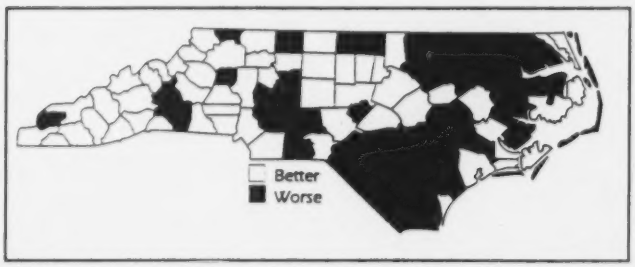
Worse Better

SAT Scores

After three years of steady progress since North Carolina ranked worst in the nation on SAT scores in 1989, the average scores continued to improve last year, reaching 859, a four-point increase. North Carolina is the only state to have four consecutive years of improvement. The national average also increased last year to 902. The state remains 48th nationally and also below the average of 939 for the Southeastern states. State Superintendent Bob Etheridge attributes improvement to more rigorous courses, expansion of testing, performance-based accountability and system report cards, and state support for preliminary SAT tests (PSAT).

For the past two years, students taking the SAT had the opportunity to take, at state expense, the PSAT for practice. For 1991-92, SAT scores jumped 10 points.

Male students generally score higher on the SAT than females, and minority children score lower than whites. The state has a high percentage of students taking the SAT (an estimated 60%) but, even when adjusted for this factor, its relative ranking is still 44th. The state has been among those at the bottom of the rankings since 1972, when comparable records became available.



Counties that are better or worse than state average on SAT scores

County Findings

SAT scores range from a high of 945 in Watauga to a low of 718 in Northampton. Only six counties and three city school systems had averages higher than the national average. They were Buncombe, Chapel Hill, Davie, Henderson, Hickory, Roanoke Rapids, Wake, Watauga, and Yancey. Twenty-one counties had average scores of less than 800 on the SAT. These counties are largely clustered in eastern North Carolina (see chart p. 22).

Student Dropout Rate

North Carolina's school dropout rate worsened by 10% last year, after several years of progress. A total of 15,626 students dropped out in grades seven through 12, compared with 13,931 in 1991-92. The '91/92 rate of 2.77 was the lowest in the state's history. Last year it rose to 3.06. State figures count dropouts who enrolled in General Education Diploma courses at community colleges as transfers rather than dropouts.

Children who drop out of school often forfeit their chances for further education and a better life. In a society that places a premium on high-tech skills, they are unable to compete. They face a bleak future shadowed by unemployment, welfare dependency, imprisonment, or teen pregnancy. The key factor in school dropout is an inability to do the academic work required. Children who drop out are more likely to be poor, minority, have limited proficiency in English, and live in a single-parent family or have a mother who herself did not complete high school.

North Carolina has addressed school dropout through the Basic Education Plan, providing $30 million a year for dropout prevention efforts such as special counselors in the middle schools, school social workers, behavior improvement programs, and early childhood programs. Local school systems are allowed to use the funds in a variety of ways tailored to local needs.

When measured in terms of students who graduate in the traditional four years after entering ninth grade, the dropout rate is higher. Only 66% of the students who entered ninth grade in 1989/90 graduated in 1992-93, a slight dip from 67% the year before. This places the state far from its goal of 80% by 1996 and 90% by the year 2000. Quality preschool programs, such as Governor Hunt's Smart Start program, have been documented as effective models for reducing school dropout by as much as 40%.

County Findings

Dropout rates for grades seven through 12 ranged from the best rate of 0.39 in Camden County to the worst rate of 6.57 per 1,000 in Caldwell County. Thirty-nine counties had dropout rates worse than the state average. Unlike the SAT and other indicators, high dropout areas are not clustered in areas of poverty (see chart p. 22).

High School Graduation Rates

The high school graduation rate, which measures the percent of students who graduate "on time" four years after entering ninth grade, continued a long slow descent. It dropped an imperceptible two percent last year. The rate has dropped seven percent since 1986. The national KIDS COUNT project, using 1991 data, ranks the state 39th in this regard.

Poor academic performance and lack of a high school diploma are formidable obstacles to getting and holding a good job. National studies show that a college education will be a requirement for up to two-thirds of the new jobs by the turn of the century. The creation of an underclass of undereducated workers augers poorly for a state where already one of every three jobs pays below the poverty level. Recent studies have shown the GED does not carry as much weight with a potential employer as a high school diploma.

As indicated earlier, this trend in the wrong direction makes it unlikely that the state will achieve its goals for high school completion by 1996 or 2000. Bright spots are the increasing emphasis on tech prep to provide technical skills to students who are not going on to college, continued funding from the legislature for the Basic Education Plan, and funding for six pilot projects on "outcome-based education" to demonstrate that students are acquiring specific skills and knowledge.

Counties that are better or worse than state average on High School Graduation rate

County Findings

High school graduation rates ranged from a low of 47% in Polk County to a high of 81% in Camden County. Fifty counties had graduation rates better than the state average. These counties are scattered across the categories of rural and urban, wealthy and poor, Eastern and Western. They show that success can happen in a variety of settings (see chart p. 22). For example, Tyrrell County, which ranked among the worst 10 counties for child poverty, had an 80.3% graduation rate; Bertie and Warren Counties, which also ranked in the worst 10 for child poverty, had graduation rates of 54.0 and 54.1

The Vision

All children will have strong, stable and capable families who are knowledgeable about parenting and child development.

All children will live in safe homes and neighborhoods, with access to essential services in their community.

Safety

Child abuse reports
near the 100,000 mark,
overwhelming the fragile system
set up to respond.

The Best & Worst

	Juveniles In Custody	Child Abuse/Neglect	Out-of-Home Placement
Best	Hyde Camden Gates Tyrrell Chatham	Tyrrell Warren Gates Martin Bladen	Clay Tyrrell Bertie Montgomery Pamlico
Worst	Buncombe Alamance Guilford Lee Forsyth	Rutherford Haywood Vance Cleveland New Hanover	Pender New Hanover Hyde Caldwell Pitt

Worse Better

Abuse & Neglect

Child abuse reports totaled 94,475 last year, nearing the 100,000 mark and signaling a 23% increase over 1991/92. They have been climbing since 1986, and have nearly doubled since 1989. In fiscal year 1992/93, 41 children died from abuse and neglect. State officials say the major factors leading to child abuse and neglect are lack of child development knowledge, mental and emotional problems, or drug abuse problems with parents or caretakers.

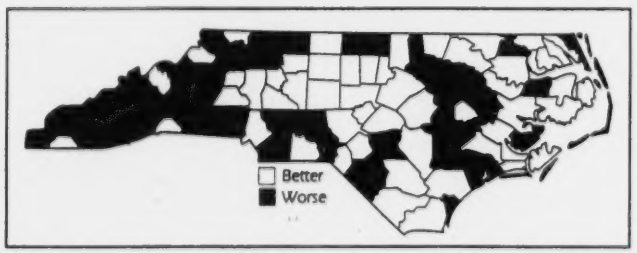
Substantiated cases of child abuse most often included sexual abuse and physical abuse. Substantiated child neglect most often included improper care or discipline (41%), improper supervision (26%), and injurious environment (20%).

The Child Fatality Task Force, created by the legislature in 1991 following the Institute report on loopholes in child abuse reporting laws, successfully sought from the 1993 legislature the following: changes in the child abuse definition, requirements for lawyers to report child abuse like other professionals, coverage of caretaker child abuse, two million dollars for additional county protective services workers, and the beginnings of a statewide child fatality review and prevention system.

Also in 1993, the Division of Social Services began a mandated biennial review of every county's child protective services system. A child welfare reform plan, to be completed this summer, was begun by the Division with community hearings statewide.

County Findings

Forty-seven counties had child abuse rates that exceeded the state average of 59 children per 1,000. Tyrrell County had the lowest rate (four), while Rutherford had the highest (127). Five counties – Mecklenburg, Cumberland, Wake, Guilford, and Robeson – accounted for almost one of every four children reported as abused or neglected (see chart p. 22).



Counties that are better or worse than state average on Abuse & Neglect

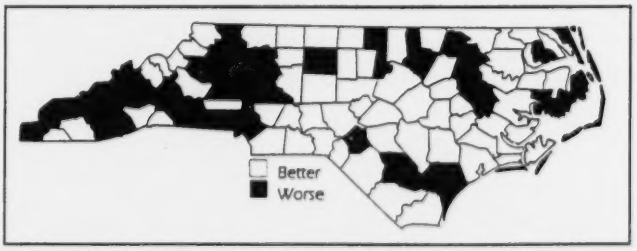
Out-Of-Home Placement

Reflecting the increasing number of child abuse reports, the number of children in out-of-home placement in family foster care and group homes and child-caring institutions increased by about six percent for the quarter ending June 30, 1993. Another 3,000 were cared for at home under supervision of, and in the custody of, county departments of social services.

Children removed from their homes tended to be under age six and minority. They are likely to remain in placement an average of 21 months, up from 19 the year before. While this is longer than the six months regarded as ideal, it is an improvement from five years ago. At that time, the average length of stay in foster care was three years and the average child was likely to stay in foster care longer than the average foster care worker stayed on the job.

In 1991, with passage of the Family Preservation Act, North Carolina switched to family preservation as a way to provide intensive in-home services to avoid unnecessary out-of-home placement. The legislation set quality standards for the programs and mandated statewide services by 1995.

Three major agencies – social services, mental health, and youth services – operate successful programs in about 40 counties. Modest expansion funds of $300,000 were added in 1992, and $500,000 in 1994-95. The programs were credited with keeping out-of-home placement increases lower than child abuse rate increases.



Counties that are better or worse than state average on Out-Of-Home Placement

County Findings

Out-of-home placement rates ranged from a low of no placements reported for the entire year in Clay and Tyrrell Counties and .17 in Bertie to a high of 9.44 per 1,000 children in Pender County. Sixty-two counties had rates better (lower) than the state average of 3.5 (see chart p. 22).

Child Deaths

In 1992, 1,883 children died in NC, 100 fewer than in 1991; this reflects the improvement in infant mortality. Of these child deaths, 1,031 died before they were one year old; 51% were minority; 113 children were murdered, most by handguns. More than 160 children have been killed by accidental shootings with firearms since 1985. Motor vehicle injury, the second leading cause of death after infant mortality, accounted for 27.9% of all deaths over age one. Drownings decreased from 67 in 1991 to 50 in 1992. Eleven infants died from child abuse before their first birthday.

Death from AIDS continued to climb. As of 12/17/93, there were 112 children with AIDS in North Carolina. There have been 49 deaths. Half of all AIDS deaths in our state were to children under age five.

Violence was a leading cause of death to teens; over 80% of the homicides were nonwhites and 65% were minority males. In ages one through four, homicide increased 33% with 12 murders. The number of children committing suicide in 1992 increased 20.8% with the number of children between ages 10 and 14 doubling. Thirty-five of the suicides (55%) were white males ages 15-19.

Poor children, males and minorities were overall more likely to die. The national KIDS COUNT project, using 1991 data for children one to 14, ranks the state 44th in child deaths.

Training School Commitments

Commitments dropped six percent in 1992, from 887 to 832. The average cost to keep a child in training school for a year is $42,000. Of the more than 800 incarcerated children under 16 about 600 have committed property crimes such as credit card fraud, while about 200 are serious and violent offenders who have committed such crimes as arson, assault, rape and burglary. Almost 70% of the children incarcerated are minority though minority children comprise only 30% of children in NC. Studies cited by Ira Schwartz at the University of Pennsylvania show that white and minority children have about the same crime rates, but the latter are more likely to be referred to court, be charged and be incarcerated.

State support for alternatives to training schools has remained at 1987 levels, despite the increase in juvenile arrests and the much higher cost of training school.

County Findings

Those counties with training schools and detention centers nearby usually had the highest rates of using these facilities. There were glaring instances of smaller counties sending more children to training schools than larger ones. For example, Cumberland sent 53 and Guilford sent 47; this is more than higher populated Mecklenburg with 33 and Wake with 43. Small counties, like Catawba (31); Edgecombe (26); Lee, Iredell, and Rowan (21); and Nash (20) sent disproportionate numbers of children (see chart p. 22).

Juvenile Arrests

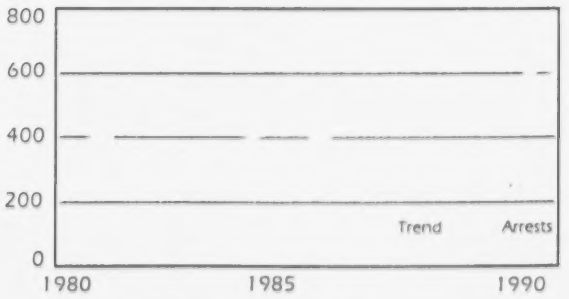
Almost 16,000 children under 16 were arrested in 1992, up from 14,000 last year, an increase of 14%. Violent crimes accounted for more than 2,600 arrests, 17% of the total arrests and more than doubled since 1985. North Carolina was ranked 36th for juvenile violent crime arrests by the national KIDS COUNT project, which used ages 10-17 and included homicide, rape, robbery or assault arrests in 1991.

The Governor's Task Force on School Violence reported that 59% of the school systems had an increase in violent behavior over the past five years. The 1993 legislature addressed school violence with funding incentives for positive discipline, peer counseling and school mediation programs, and laws to stiffen penalties for carrying weapons to school and to make parents responsible for safe storage of weapons.

County Findings

Juvenile arrests ranged from none in 16 counties to more than 3,000 in Mecklenburg County. Highest arrest rates per child population 10 to 15 were in Alamance, which arrested one of every eight children 10 to 15, and Guilford, which arrested almost 3,000 of its 25,000 10 to 15 year olds. Mecklenburg (21.49), Cumberland (15.09), and Roberson (14.86) Counties had the highest violent crime arrest rates (see chart p. 22).

Arrests For Violent Offenses



Source: Division of Criminal Information

The Vision

All children will grow up in an

economically stable family. All children

will have the opportunity to learn

skills that will allow them

to earn a living wage to secure

their own future.

1994

Security

As a falling tide lowers all boats, the economic recession nudges more families into poverty.

The Best & Worst

	Median Family Income	Children in Poverty	Children on AFDC
Best	Wake	Davie	Dare
	Mecklenburg	Dare	Watauga
	Orange	Catawba	Alexander
	Durham	Wake	Yadkin
	Forsyth	Polk	Avery
Worst	Tyrrell	Graham	Northampton
	Swain	Swain	Halifax
	Graham	Halifax	Washington
	Hyde	Warren	Hertford
	Warren	Hertford	Perquimans

Worse Better

Child Support

Mothers and children who do not receive child support are twice as likely to live in poverty as those who do. Establishment of child support orders and enforcement of collection are the keys to improving the economic well-being of children in single-parent families. Child support collections for 1992/93 were $347 million, an increase of eight percent over the previous year. Average child support payment was $214 per month, up two dollars from $212 the year before.

The number of child support cases, which increased 19% in 1992, climbed another 12% last year, to a total of 396,655. Only 40% of these custodial parents had obtained court orders. Of the 155,000 cases with court orders 37% of the absent parents defaulted totally or in part on their child support obligation, about the same level as the previous two years.

Automatic wage withholding of child support payments and tax refund intercepts help explain the increase in collections. Paternity, which must be established for court-ordered child support, was determined for almost 21,000 children, a seven percent increase from the year before. Paternity cases have risen as out-of-wedlock births increase. Also, as the economy worsened, more people were unable to meet their child support obligations.

Child support enforcement in the state is currently split between the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Department of Human Resources. Legislative efforts to merge the two programs have failed thus far. The Human Resources program is developing an automated system to handle collection and payments on a daily basis by the fall of 1995.

Child Poverty

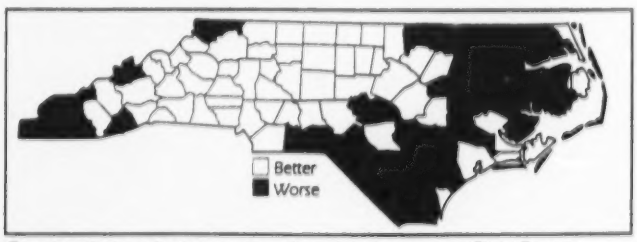
Poverty is the root cause of many problems facing children and families, walking hand in hand with poor health, child abuse, teen pregnancy, and school failure. More than 320,000 children lived in poverty in North Carolina in 1992, an increase of 16%. The worsening economy nudged more than 100,000 children onto the AFDC rolls last year. The national KIDS COUNT project ranked North Carolina 30th for the percentage of children in poverty, using 1991 data.

Research by Dr. Andrew Dobelstein of the Conference on Poverty, a faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, points out that overall poverty in the state is 16%; however, for preschool children it is almost 23% and for school-age children it is 19%. Nor is poverty distributed evenly. He notes that 75 counties have higher rates of poverty among preschoolers than the state average. For example, more than a third of the children living in Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, and Warren Counties are poor.

Poor children are most likely to be found in single-parent families, Dr. Dobelstein says. For example, 81% of all poor families with children in Durham County are headed by a single female. The proportion of families headed by a single female statewide has increased to 22%. Poverty is also concentrated among minorities. In 45 counties, a higher percentage of minorities live in poverty. For example, in Lenoir County more than 75% of all poor people are minority.

County Findings

Child poverty is found across the state, ranging from a low of about eight percent in Davie County to a high of 40% in Graham County. Fifteen counties had more than 5,000 poor children in their county and accounted for more than 40% of all poor children in the state: Buncombe, Cumberland, Durham, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Halifax, Mecklenburg, New Hanover, Onslow, Pitt, Robeson, Wake, Wayne, and Wilson (see chart p.22).



Counties that are better or worse than state average on Child Poverty

Children on Public Assistance

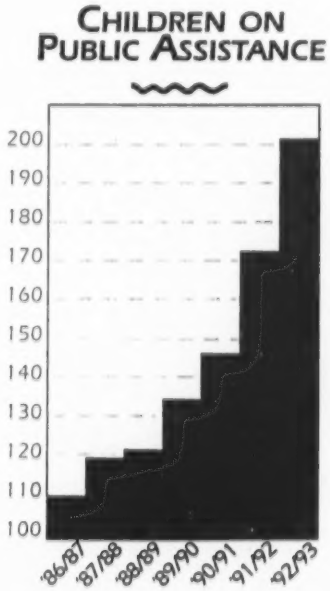
When parents are unable to provide adequately for their children, public assistance programs are designed to help provide a minimal standard of living until the family can get back on its feet. The average family on public assistance has two children, the same as the average family in the state, and stays on assistance less than two years.

Children receiving AFDC qualify for help when one or both parents are unemployed, absent, incapacitated or deceased. A family of four with no income received $297 per month, or $3,564 a year. This is about one-fourth of the 1992 poverty level.

Food stamps are coupons redeemable for certain kinds of foods and are provided based on family income. Taken together, AFDC and food stamps provide about 60% of the poverty level of $14,350 for a family of four. Two-thirds of AFDC recipients and half of all food stamp recipients are children.

Caseloads for AFDC and food stamps topped out in late 1993, officials said, and have remained constant. The average number of children on AFDC last year was 220,835, up 10%. The year before, the increase was 16%. An average of 289,611 children receive food stamps in a typical month in 1992/93. This is an increase of seven percent compared to 18% the year before.

Adjusted for inflation, the state's average AFDC benefits have fallen 36% since 1972. There has not been an increase in the AFDC payment rate in our state since 1990. We have one of the 10 lowest rates in the nation.



There has been a steady increase in numbers of children receiving AFDC (numbers in thousands).

County Findings

Statewide, more than 13% of all children are poor enough to quality for AFDC and food stamps. Dare County has the lowest proportion of children receiving AFDC, with less than five percent, while Northampton County, with more than 30%, had the highest. There are 48 counties with higher percentages of children on AFDC than the state average. Mecklenburg and Cumberland Counties have the highest number of children receiving AFDC and food stamps (see chart p. 22).

Health Education Security Safety

COUNTY	Infant Mortality Rate	% Low Birth Weight	% Births to Single Teens	Dropout Rate	SAT Scores	High School Graduation Rate	% Child Poverty	% Children w/ Working Parents	% Children on AFDC	Median Family Income	Juvenile Arrest Rate	Violent Arrest Rate	Child Abuse/ Neglect Rate	Out of Home Placement
Alamance	10.8 (60)	8.7 (57)	10.0 (39)	6.01 (96)	864 (27)	64.5 (56)	12.10 (12)	67.7 (28)	9.3 (27)	$36,700 (14)	135.04 (100)	10.71 (95)	38.9 (17)	3.38 (59)
Alexander	5.8 (22)	3.8 (3)	9.9 (38)	5.55 (87)	824 (62)	68.5 (27)	12.68 (16)	69.8 (17)	5.5 (3)	$33,900 (36)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	25.4 (8)	4.02 (70)
Alleghany	0.0 (1)	7.6 (32)	3.4 (1)	3.70 (45)	821 (65)	66.7 (40)	21.99 (60)	73.1 (7)	6.8 (6)	$25,100 (89)	4.04 (49)	0.00 (1)	54.5 (45)	5.92 (90)
Anson	21.4 (96)	15.5 (100)	16.6 (87)	3.44 (36)	727 (98)	74.0 (8)	23.17 (66)	72.1 (9)	19.3 (79)	$28,900 (67)	2.64 (38)	0.88 (63)	40.3 (18)	2.12 (26)
Ashe	8.0 (34)	4.4 (5)	10.8 (49)	4.88 (74)	850 (38)	64.0 (58)	22.67 (64)	61.9 (69)	9.2 (26)	$25,400 (85)	1.72 (33)	0.00 (1)	64.3 (66)	1.73 (15)
Avery	4.9 (15)	6.9 (21)	7.4 (17)	2.32 (11)	881 (13)	58.2 (87)	17.07 (39)	53.6 (90)	6.5 (5)	$27,000 (78)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	80.0 (83)	2.13 (27)
Beaufort	4.9 (15)	11.5 (89)	13.8 (77)	4.49 (65)	803 (75)	68.7 (25)	26.38 (76)	62.8 (63)	16.8 (72)	$29,100 (66)	26.48 (84)	1.50 (72)	45.6 (24)	2.89 (44)
Bertie	12.9 (73)	10.7 (83)	19.7 (95)	3.46 (38)	766 (88)	54.0 (97)	36.06 (95)	62.3 (66)	21.3 (86)	$24,100 (95)	7.85 (59)	0.49 (49)	19.7 (6)	0.17 (3)
Bladen	18.2 (84)	10.4 (79)	18.2 (90)	4.57 (67)	753 (92)	60.1 (82)	28.46 (82)	63.0 (62)	21.0 (84)	$24,800 (91)	5.04 (53)	0.72 (61)	18.1 (5)	5.05 (84)
Brunswick	4.2 (13)	7.5 (29)	13.5 (73)	2.34 (12)	806 (74)	65.0 (52)	23.55 (69)	63.1 (61)	14.0 (56)	$30,200 (55)	5.37 (54)	0.24 (39)	48.8 (35)	1.86 (19)
Buncombe	5.1 (18)	6.5 (18)	9.3 (32)	3.78 (47)	900 (7)	63.4 (63)	16.18 (34)	61.6 (71)	10.8 (34)	$34,500 (31)	12.65 (69)	2.24 (80)	67.6 (73)	5.02 (81)
Burke	7.3 (29)	6.4 (15)	8.6 (24)	5.39 (82)	855 (32)	72.3 (13)	14.10 (24)	66.2 (40)	8.5 (20)	$34,300 (32)	0.66 (21)	0.17 (37)	76.2 (80)	3.29 (56)
Cabarrus	9.0 (36)	7.1 (24)	9.7 (33)	4.10 (56)	826 (56)	67.9 (32)	10.10 (6)	66.9 (32)	8.9 (23)	$39,400 (8)	9.06 (61)	1.28 (68)	66.3 (70)	2.74 (42)
Caldwell	7.8 (32)	8.4 (50)	11.4 (56)	8.89 (100)	871 (18)	53.0 (98)	13.83 (23)	69.2 (19)	8.1 (16)	$33,700 (39)	16.64 (74)	1.42 (70)	78.6 (81)	7.05 (97)
Camden	0.0 (1)	8.2 (45)	4.1 (2)	0.59 (1)	870 (20)	81.1 (1)	21.84 (58)	61.5 (72)	11.7 (43)	$32,100 (45)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	41.1 (21)	5.04 (82)
Carteret	10.0 (53)	7.5 (29)	8.0 (19)	5.44 (83)	854 (33)	64.7 (54)	16.95 (38)	63.4 (58)	10.2 (32)	$33,800 (37)	17.88 (76)	0.50 (51)	47.7 (32)	1.30 (7)
Caswell	7.6 (31)	8.0 (41)	10.6 (45)	3.62 (42)	775 (86)	71.0 (17)	19.29 (48)	65.6 (42)	12.4 (48)	$30,700 (52)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	69.1 (75)	1.86 (19)
Catawba	8.4 (37)	7.9 (37)	10.9 (53)	4.31 (60)	885 (11)	69.6 (20)	9.69 (3)	73.7 (5)	7.7 (11)	$37,400 (12)	7.37 (57)	0.31 (41)	56.9 (50)	4.34 (74)
Chatham	1.8 (7)	6.1 (11)	8.9 (27)	4.50 (66)	842 (47)	65.9 (49)	12.39 (14)	74.6 (3)	8.0 (13)	$36,000 (19)	4.80 (51)	1.85 (76)	50.2 (39)	2.62 (38)
Cherokee	8.5 (39)	11.1 (86)	6.4 (12)	3.54 (40)	878 (14)	66.1 (46)	26.77 (77)	52.3 (93)	14.5 (61)	$25,500 (84)	3.45 (43)	0.58 (57)	96.7 (93)	4.91 (80)
Chowan	14.2 (80)	10.4 (79)	13.2 (71)	1.88 (5)	825 (58)	66.3 (42)	25.30 (71)	59.7 (76)	21.2 (85)	$28,000 (75)	36.01 (90)	5.73 (92)	28.6 (11)	1.95 (21)
Clay	0.0 (1)	3.2 (1)	7.9 (18)	1.88 (5)	837 (49)	69.6 (20)	21.95 (59)	67.7 (28)	7.1 (8)	$25,400 (85)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	47.7 (32)	0.00 (1)
Cleveland	11.3 (64)	9.5 (73)	14.9 (82)	3.64 (44)	843 (45)	72.0 (15)	14.78 (27)	67.3 (30)	14.9 (64)	$35,000 (25)	3.76 (46)	0.29 (40)	110.9 (97)	6.06 (92)
Columbus	6.9 (28)	8.7 (57)	14.2 (80)	4.27 (59)	779 (84)	62.8 (66)	29.96 (87)	53.9 (89)	21.4 (89)	$25,100 (89)	3.70 (45)	0.41 (47)	36.9 (15)	2.03 (24)
Craven	13.4 (77)	8.1 (44)	9.0 (29)	3.24 (30)	856 (31)	57.2 (91)	20.15 (51)	53.5 (92)	14.2 (57)	$32,500 (44)	28.40 (85)	1.74 (75)	58.4 (53)	2.20 (28)
Cumberland	10.9 (62)	8.0 (41)	8.2 (21)	3.05 (27)	813 (71)	75.9 (6)	20.55 (54)	53.6 (90)	14.4 (59)	$31,300 (47)	49.96 (94)	15.09 (99)	66.2 (69)	2.69 (40)
Currituck	21.7 (97)	13.0 (97)	8.7 (25)	5.19 (81)	871 (18)	65.7 (50)	12.68 (16)	59.4 (78)	10.8 (34)	$35,100 (24)	11.20 (64)	0.00 (1)	91.9 (91)	4.38 (75)
Dare	9.9 (52)	4.6 (7)	4.3 (3)	2.59 (20)	868 (23)	63.1 (65)	8.25 (2)	66.3 (39)	4.5 (1)	$39,000 (9)	22.61 (79)	0.65 (59)	54.8 (46)	3.84 (67)
Davidson	7.8 (32)	7.0 (22)	10.6 (45)	3.60 (41)	825 (58)	66.0 (47)	13.42 (20)	70.0 (15)	9.5 (28)	$36,100 (18)	21.83 (78)	4.21 (86)	58.3 (52)	2.39 (33)
Davie	13.6 (78)	10.8 (85)	8.4 (22)	3.88 (49)	906 (6)	76.0 (5)	7.53 (1)	76.0 (2)	12.0 (47)	$38,900 (10)	4.63 (50)	0.42 (48)	54.9 (47)	6.25 (93)
Duplin	21.0 (94)	10.6 (82)	14.4 (81)	4.07 (55)	803 (75)	69.3 (23)	23.33 (68)	61.8 (70)	15.4 (67)	$27,000 (78)	1.34 (30)	0.54 (55)	60.2 (56)	5.02 (87)
Durham	9.0 (46)	8.8 (60)	10.7 (47)	5.55 (87)	872 (17)	56.6 (92)	16.03 (33)	69.0 (21)	15.8 (68)	$43,200 (4)	2.24 (36)	0.54 (55)	30.2 (12)	4.25 (73)
Edgecombe	13.0 (74)	12.5 (96)	21.6 (99)	3.94 (52)	802 (78)	59.5 (84)	29.64 (86)	66.7 (36)	24.0 (92)	$29,200 (65)	84.07 (97)	11.38 (96)	87.5 (89)	6.25 (93)
Forsyth	11.2 (63)	10.4 (79)	11.3 (55)	4.26 (58)	878 (14)	62.8 (66)	15.56 (31)	64.8 (51)	14.9 (64)	$42,400 (5)	17.71 (75)*	1.51 (73)	34.5 (14)	2.98 (46)
Franklin	18.5 (86)	7.4 (28)	11.9 (61)	3.52 (39)	795 (82)	57.5 (89)	17.93 (45)	63.8 (56)	14.7 (63)	$32,700 (42)	3.01 (42)	0.67 (60)	60.2 (56)	4.43 (77)
Gaston	9.3 (49)	8.2 (45)	12.7 (68)	3.37 (34)	837 (49)	62.4 (72)	15.05 (30)	65.5 (44)	14.4 (59)	$36,400 (16)	35.08 (89)	5.48 (90)	67.0 (72)	5.04 (82)
Gates	7.3 (29)	11.7 (92)	10.2 (43)	1.65 (4)	779 (84)	76.6 (4)	21.22 (56)	63.2 (59)	13.0 (52)	$31,100 (48)	3.89 (48)	0.00 (1)	7.6 (3)	1.23 (6)
Graham	21.7 (97)	3.3 (2)	8.7 (25)	5.96 (95)	825 (58)	68.6 (26)	40.34 (100)	48.0 (99)	14.6 (62)	$22,000 (98)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	63.0 (64)	3.10 (48)
Granville	10.4 (57)	12.3 (94)	11.8 (59)	2.40 (15)	847 (41)	61.2 (76)	16.32 (35)	70.0 (15)	11.6 (41)	$35,500 (22)	16.43 (73)	2.84 (84)	30.3 (13)	1.37 (8)
Greene	9.2 (48)	11.1 (86)	19.8 (97)	5.18 (80)	749 (94)	62.7 (69)	28.51 (83)	73.7 (5)	17.5 (74)	$30,400 (54)	0.71 (22)	0.00 (1)	55.6 (49)	2.25 (29)
Guilford	10.8 (60)	8.6 (52)	10.1 (41)	2.81 (24)	865 (26)	71.6 (16)	14.30 (25)	65.6 (42)	12.8 (50)	$41,100 (6)	108.41 (99)	14.11 (97)	45.8 (26)	4.24 (72)
Halifax	18.7 (88)	10.2 (77)	19.4 (94)	3.30 (31)	766 (88)	58.1 (88)	37.57 (98)	59.7 (76)	28.8 (99)	$25,200 (88)	30.43 (87)	2.31 (81)	40.9 (19)	3.76 (66)
Harnett	9.5 (51)	9.3 (70)	10.8 (49)	4.42 (64)	851 (36)	62.2 (73)	22.70 (65)	57.2 (82)	16.0 (71)	$28,800 (70)	3.76 (46)	0.36 (44)	58.2 (51)	2.96 (45)
Haywood	5.7 (21)	8.0 (41)	7.3 (16)	4.02 (53)	861 (28)	78.1 (3)	17.56 (42)	56.6 (83)	11.2 (39)	$30,000 (58)	1.21 (28)	0.00 (1)	118.3 (99)	5.65 (88)
Henderson	6.2 (23)	6.7 (19)	7.2 (15)	4.61 (70)	908 (5)	73.1 (12)	17.36 (41)	58.1 (80)	10.9 (37)	$35,000 (25)	9.70 (62)	0.40 (45)	63.3 (65)	1.84 (18)
Hertford	21.1 (95)	14.5 (99)	22.9 (100)	2.80 (23)	727 (98)	63.6 (61)	37.05 (96)	65.2 (47)	26.0 (97)	$24,300 (93)	15.57 (72)	0.49 (49)	59.3 (54)	2.00 (23)
Hoke	25.7 (99)	13.1 (98)	17.1 (89)	4.58 (68)	799 (80	57.3 (90)	28.80 (84)	68.3 (25)	24.2 (93)	$28,600 (72)	22.62 (80)	2.09 (79)	50.7 (40)	3.66 (63)
Hyde	0.0 (1)	8.8 (60)	11.8 (59)	1.61 (3)	836 (51)	62.6 (70)	33.45 (93)	54.9 (85)	22.6 (90)	$22,300 (97)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	24.3 (7)	8.33 (98)
Iredell	4.9 (15)	7.9 (37)	10.9 (53)	5.01 (77)	884 (12)	64.8 (53)	12.13 (13)	65.0 (49)	9.8 (31)	$37,200 (13)	0.54 (19)	0.00 (1)	49.3 (36)	3.69 (65)
Jackson	10.1 (54)	4.4 (5)	9.8 (35)	3.42 (35)	850 (38)	67.2 (38)	19.91 (49)	70.1 (14)	10.8 (34)	$28,900 (67)	0.53 (18)	0.53 (53)	83.2 (87)	3.68 (64)
Johnston	6.4 (25)	9.8 (75)	10.7 (47)	3.63 (43)	836 (51)	68.1 (31)	18.27 (47)	67.9 (27)	13.5 (54)	$33,800 (37)	7.69 (58)	1.16 (65)	45.8 (26)	1.59 (12)

Lenoir	12.8 (72)	9.7 (74)	15.2 (83)	3.79 (48)	810 (72)	62.0 (75)	28.24 (81)	68.9 (22)	21.3 (86)	$29,700 (61)	0.38 (17)	0.00 (1)	60.2 (56)	3.26 (53)
Lincoln	2.7 (10)	6.4 (15)	9.1 (30)	5.74 (91)	851 (36)	69.6 (20)	13.16 (19)	65.3 (45)	9.5 (28)	$36,300 (17)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	81.7 (85)	2.65 (39)
Macon	11.5 (66)	7.6 (32)	5.3 (7)	5.50 (84)	847 (41)	62.2 (73)	22.37 (63)	48.7 (97)	8.0 (13)	$28,700 (71)	13.33 (70)	1.90 (78)	82.7 (86)	1.46 (10)
Madison	5.3 (20)	12.2 (93)	6.9 (14)	4.58 (68)	889 (9)	62.8 (66)	21.78 (57)	54.8 (87)	11.8 (44)	$26,800 (82)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	63.0 (63)	6.04 (91)
Martin	20.0 (91)	10.2 (77)	18.2 (90)	3.34 (33)	737 (96)	66.2 (45)	30.73 (88)	74.5 (4)	20.5 (82)	$28,100 (74)	21.48 (77)	1.34 (69)	17.2 (4)	3.28 (54)
McDowell	8.8 (44)	6.4 (15)	10.8 (49)	5.53 (85)	818 (69)	73.3 (10)	12.60 (15)	66.7 (36)	8.6 (21)	$30,200 (55)	1.34 (30)	0.34 (43)	72.7 (78)	5.66 (89)
Mecklenburg	10.1 (54)	8.8 (60)	10.1 (41)	6.68 (98)	888 (10)	68.8 (24)	13.66 (21)	60.9 (75)	13.9 (55)	$45,700 (2)	83.24 (96)	21.49 (100)	43.9 (22)	3.87 (68)
Mitchell	12.5 (71)	5.6 (9)	6.3 (10)	4.32 (62)	848 (40)	67.7 (34)	17.92 (44)	45.0 (100)	8.0 (13)	$26,900 (81)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	89.1 (90)	2.29 (30)
Montgomery	13.1 (75)	6.3 (13)	15.7 (84)	5.94 (93)	816 (70)	59.0 (86)	20.00 (50)	76.1 (1)	12.9 (51)	$29,500 (63)	0.92 (25)	0.00 (1)	49.5 (38)	0.66 (4)
Moore	11.8 (68)	7.7 (35)	12.3 (64)	5.04 (78)	845 (44)	65.5 (51)	17.65 (43)	69.5 (18)	10.7 (33)	$36,600 (15)	5.84 (55)	2.38 (82)	38.2 (16)	3.38 (59)
Nash	10.4 (57)	9.1 (69)	12.2 (63)	3.15 (29)	827 (55)	63.9 (59)	18.11 (46)	64.7 (52)	12.7 (49)	$34,800 (29)	0.89 (24)	0.15 (36)	59.7 (55)	3.34 (57)
New Hanover	9.4 (50)	8.2 (45)	11.4 (56)	4.74 (72)	853 (35)	63.5 (62)	20.50 (53)	59.4 (78)	18.3 (75)	$37,600 (11)	54.07 (95)	7.88 (93)	104.5 (96)	8.35 (99)
Northampton	3.4 (12)	9.4 (71)	18.9 (93)	2.26 (10)	718 (100)	54.1 (95)	33.08 (90)	54.3 (88)	30.6 (100)	$24,200 (94)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	51.7 (42)	2.57 (36)
Onslow	6.3 (24)	6.3 (13)	5.1 (5)	2.74 (22)	860 (29)	64.6 (55)	16.41 (36)	50.8 (95)	9.1 (25)	$27,800 (76)	38.88 (91)	4.98 (88)	66.7 (71)	2.09 (25)
Orange	8.6 (41)	8.3 (49)	4.3 (3)	2.39 (14)	931 (2)	75.1 (7)	10.75 (9)	64.6 (54)	8.9 (23)	$45,500 (3)	3.55 (44)	0.53 (53)	40.9 (19)	3.20 (50)
Pamlico	0.0 (1)	11.4 (88)	14.0 (79)	3.32 (32)	825 (58)	66.3 (42)	24.03 (70)	65.2 (47)	18.7 (76)	$29,300 (64)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	62.4 (61)	1.16 (5)
Pasquotank	18.6 (8)	8.9 (65)	11.5 (58)	2.55 (18)	821 (65)	66.3 (42)	28.12 (80)	54.9 (85)	20.3 (81)	$30,000 (58)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	46.5 (30)	2.71 (41)
Pender	6.8 (27)	7.2 (25)	13.5 (73)	3.92 (51)	803 (75)	60.3 (81)	25.76 (72)	57.3 (81)	15.1 (66)	$31,000 (49)	2.87 (41)	1.23 (67)	54.3 (44)	9.44 (100)
Perquimans	15.3 (83)	10.7 (83)	16.0 (86)	2.99 (26)	802 (78)	72.3 (13)	34.95 (94)	48.1 (98)	25.3 (96)	$24,400 (92)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	25.7 (9)	5.20 (85)
Person	2.4 (8)	8.6 (52)	10.8 (49)	3.90 (50)	823 (63)	66.4 (41)	17.15 (40)	69.2 (19)	11.6 (41)	$34,900 (28)	11.40 (65)	1.18 (66)	79.4 (82)	5.37 (86)
Pitt	13.7 (79)	8.7 (57)	13.8 (77)	4.64 (71)	870 (20)	66.0 (47)	26.09 (73)	64.9 (50)	18.7 (76)	$33,700 (39)	26.34 (83)	4.31 (87)	79.9 (83)	6.43 (96)
Polk	12.1 (69)	6.7 (19)	9.7 (33)	2.66 (21)	891 (8)	47.1 (100)	10.01 (5)	71.5 (10)	6.8 (6)	$35,600 (20)	11.76 (66)	0.00 (1)	49.4 (37)	1.73 (15)
Randolph	8.7 (43)	7.0 (22)	8.0 (19)	5.94 (93)	870 (20)	61.1 (77)	10.52 (8)	71.4 (11)	7.1 (8)	$35,000 (25)	10.03 (63)	1.06 (64)	47.2 (31)	2.32 (31)
Richmond	10.3 (56)	8.6 (52)	18.7 (92)	2.17 (8)	843 (45)	60.9 (79)	23.28 (67)	71.0 (12)	16.8 (72)	$29,900 (60)	1.92 (35)	0.00 (1)	96.2 (92)	3.28 (54)
Robeson	12.1 (69)	9.9 (76)	19.7 (95)	2.91 (25)	737 (96)	56.3 (93)	33.33 (91)	62.6 (64)	24.2 (93)	$25,900 (83)	86.16 (98)	14.86 (98)	96.9 (94)	3.20 (50)
Rockingham	11.5 (66)	8.8 (60)	12.6 (67)	4.89 (75)	832 (53)	66.9 (39)	16.41 (36)	68.8 (23)	11.4 (40)	$34,200 (34)	14.31 (71)	2.46 (83)	48.5 (34)	1.64 (13)
Rowan	10.5 (59)	7.5 (29)	10.4 (44)	5.54 (86)	826 (56)	67.6 (35)	12.07 (11)	66.8 (34)	11.1 (38)	$34,800 (29)	32.61 (88)	5.07 (89)	45.6 (24)	4.42 (76)
Rutherford	19.9 (90)	7.3 (26)	12.3 (64)	4.75 (73)	820 (67)	64.1 (57)	15.69 (32)	66.6 (38)	11.9 (45)	$31,800 (46)	0.83 (23)	0.00 (1)	126.4 (100)	3.87 (68)
Sampson	11.4 (65)	9.4 (71)	13.7 (76)	2.50 (17)	796 (81)	67.6 (35)	26.10 (74)	65.3 (45)	15.8 (68)	$27,100 (77)	2.63 (37)	0.22 (38)	45.8 (26)	2.41 (33)
Scotland	19.0 (89)	11.6 (90)	20.9 (98)	4.06 (54)	766 (88)	52.6 (99)	27.98 (79)	66.8 (34)	25.1 (95)	$30,200 (55)	40.02 (92)	5.52 (91)	46.4 (29)	1.42 (9)
Stanly	8.1 (35)	8.6 (52)	9.8 (35)	3.45 (37)	823 (63)	67.4 (37)	14.75 (26)	72.3 (8)	8.1 (16)	$33,000 (41)	28.40 (85)	1.68 (74)	69.4 (76)	1.67 (14)
Stokes	6.5 (26)	8.2 (45)	6.0 (9)	5.75 (92)	828 (54)	63.8 (60)	10.50 (7)	68.3 (25)	8.1 (16)	$35,600 (20)	1.90 (34)	0.32 (42)	60.6 (59)	3.34 (57)
Surry	8.3 (36)	6.0 (10)	6.4 (12)	4.31 (60)	867 (24)	68.3 (29)	12.93 (18)	67.0 (31)	7.2 (10)	$31,000 (49)	0.61 (20)	0.61 (58)	68.1 (74)	1.77 (17)
Swain	28.2 (100)	9.0 (66)	12.4 (66)	2.23 (9)	838 (48)	73.8 (9)	37.77 (99)	61.1 (74)	19.2 (78)	$21,800 (99)	1.03 (27)	0.00 (1)	64.5 (67)	6.42 (95)
Transylvania	13.1 (75)	6.2 (12)	9.8 (35)	2.42 (16)	876 (16)	67.8 (33)	22.02 (61)	49.7 (96)	11.9 (45)	$34,200 (34)	7.28 (56)	0.00 (1)	74.8 (79)	4.48 (78)
Tyrrell	20.0 (91)	4.0 (4)	10.0 (39)	1.31 (2)	782 (83)	80.3 (2)	33.35 (92)	64.7 (52)	22.6 (90)	$20,500 (100)	2.67 (39)	0.00 (1)	3.8 (1)	0.00 (1)
Union	8.5 (39)	8.5 (51)	9.2 (31)	4.11 (57)	860 (29)	59.6 (83)	10.97 (10)	62.3 (66)	9.6 (30)	$39,700 (7)	11.94 (67)	1.43 (71)	85.8 (88)	3.38 (59)
Vance	4.5 (14)	11.6 (90)	13.6 (75)	5.56 (89)	761 (91)	61.1 (77)	27.57 (78)	62.5 (65)	21.3 (86)	$28,600 (72)	8.60 (60)	0.86 (62)	116.6 (98)	5.55 (87)
Wake	8.8 (44)	7.7 (35)	6.3 (10)	5.05 (79)	930 (3)	70.9 (19)	9.73 (4)	64.6 (54)	8.2 (19)	$49,600 (1)	22.98 (81)	4.08 (85)	45.3 (23)	2.60 (37)
Warren	18.3 (85)	12.3 (94)	13.2 (71)	6.59 (97)	741 (95)	54.1 (95)	37.56 (97)	66.2 (40)	19.7 (80)	$23,000 (96)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	5.5 (2)	2.33 (32)
Washington	14.9 (82)	7.9 (37)	12.9 (69)	1.97 (7)	753 (92)	71.0 (17)	30.81 (89)	51.0 (94)	27.2 (98)	$28,900 (67)	5.02 (52)	0.00 (1)	60.5 (59)	3.17 (49)
Watauga	2.9 (11)	5.3 (8)	5.3 (7)	2.35 (13)	945 (1)	68.3 (29)	13.66 (21)	61.3 (73)	4.8 (2)	$31,000 (49)	0.95 (26)	0.00 (1)	26.1 (10)	1.57 (11)
Wayne	8.6 (41)	7.9 (37)	12.0 (62)	3.13 (28)	807 (73)	68.4 (28)	20.82 (55)	62.0 (68)	15.9 (70)	$30,700 (52)	23.06 (82)	1.89 (77)	102.8 (95)	2.47 (35)
Wilkes	5.2 (19)	7.3 (26)	8.9 (27)	6.70 (99)	866 (25)	62.6 (70)	14.79 (28)	70.4 (13)	8.8 (22)	$29,600 (62)	2.83 (40)	0.40 (45)	65.3 (68)	4.14 (71)
Wilson	8.4 (37)	7.6 (32)	16.6 (87)	3.76 (46)	847 (41)	55.2 (94)	29.52 (85)	63.7 (57)	20.6 (83)	$32,800 (42)	12.17 (68)	0.50 (51)	62.6 (62)	3.41 (62)
Yadkin	2.5 (9)	8.6 (52)	8.4 (22)	4.32 (62)	854 (33)	73.2 (11)	14.86 (29)	66.9 (32)	6.2 (4)	$34,300 (32)	1.68 (32)	0.00 (1)	7.8 (27)	4.58 (79)
Yancey	20.6 (93)	8.8 (60)	5.2 (6)	5.58 (90)	923 (4)	59.3 (85)	20.20 (52)	63.2 (59)	7.7 (11)	$25,300 (87)	0.00 (1)	0.00 (1)	53.6 (43)	3.23 (52)
Average	9.9	8.4	10.7	4.32	859	65.6	20.82	63.6	13.3	$35,200	29.29	4.96	59.4	3.50

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COUNTY DATA NOTES

1. See Glossary for complete information on data definition, time and source.
2. For most indicators, a ranking of 1 = best and 100 = worst.
3. All counties are ranked from 1 to 100. When counties share the same rate, percentage or total as other counties, they receive the same ranking. All counties that reported zero for certain indicators received a ranking of 1.
4. For the indicators Median Family Income, Children with Working Parents, and SAT Scores, a ranking of 1 = highest and 100 = lowest.
5. Student Dropout Rate is the percentage of students per county in grades 9-12 who left school in FY '92/93.

Glossary & Sources

Child Health

INFANT MORTALITY RATE The number of deaths to infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births in 1992. *State Center for Health & Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.*

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT The percentage of children born weighing 5.5 pounds or less at birth in 1992. *State Center for Health & Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.*

PERCENTAGE OF ALL BIRTHS TO SINGLE TEENS The percentage of live births which occurred to unmarried women ages 15-19 in 1992. *State Center for Health & Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources.*

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITHOUT INSURANCE The percentage and number of children age 17 and younger who are uninsured. *The Southern Institute report (1991 data).*

Education

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES The projected percentage of ninth graders who are expected to graduate from high school four years later for fiscal year July 1, 1992 through June 30, 1993 (FY '92/93). *NC Department of Public Instruction. For counties with multiple school systems, a county average was calculated and ranks designated by the Institute from data provided by the Department.*

STUDENT DROPOUT RATE The unduplicated percentage of students in grades seven through 12 who dropped out of school during the '92/93 school year. *NC Department of Public Instruction. For counties with multiple school systems, a county average was calculated and ranks designated by the Institute from data provided by the Department.*

SAT SCORE The average score of students taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in North Carolina, FY '92/93. *The North Carolina 1993 Scholastic Aptitude Test Report , August, 1993. For counties with multiple school systems, a county average was calculated by the Institute from data provided by the NC Department of Public Instruction.*

Safety

CHILDREN REPORTED AS ABUSED/NEGLECTED Number of children reported for abuse and/or neglect per 1,000 children ages 0-17 residing in the county for FY '92/93. This is not an unduplicated count. *Division of Social Services, NC Department of Human Resources.*

CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT The number of children, for whom county departments of social services have custody or placements responsibility, who are placed in out-of-home situations including emergency shelters, foster care, group homes, and institutions, for the quarter ending 6/30/93. Rate is per 1,000 children of all children ages 0-17. *Calculated by the Institute with data provided by Division of Social Services, NC Department of Human Resources.*

TRAINING SCHOOL COMMITMENTS Total admissions for 1992-93. *Division of Youth Services, NC Department of Human Resources.*

JUVENILE ARREST RATE The number of juveniles ages 10 through 15 who were arrested in 1992, per 1,000 children. 1992 Juvenile Arrests by County based on Juvenile 1990 Population. *Governor's Crime Commission, NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. Rate calculated by the Institute.*

VIOLENT JUVENILE ARRESTS Defined as murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. In North Carolina, a juvenile is anyone under age 18, but those aged 16 and 17 who commit a crime will be tried as adults. 1992 Juvenile Violent Arrests by County based on Juvenile 1990 Population. *Governor's Crime Commission, NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. Rate calculated by the Institute.*

CHILD DEATHS The number of children under the age of 19 who died in 1992. State Center for Health and Environmental Statistics, Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources. Child AIDS refers to the total number of children 19 years or younger who have died from AIDS as of December 17, 1993. *Division of Epidemiology, Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources.*

Security

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME The median family income for all families with children, 1990. *1990 Census Data, State Data Center, NC Office of State Budget and Management.*

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY The number of children living in families whose income falls below the official federal poverty level, $13,950 for a family of four in 1992. *Estimated number of children in poverty based on 1990 Census Data, Division of Medical Assistance, NC Department of Human Resources. Also, Conference on Poverty, Chapel Hill, NC, 1994.*

CHILDREN ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE The average number of children served monthly by the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and Food Stamp Programs '92/93. AFDC is a public assistance program for families with children whose annual income falls below the federal poverty level. *Division of Social Services, NC Department of Human Resources.*

CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTION The total child support collections generated by The Administrative Office of the Courts and the state's Child Support Enforcement Office, '92/93. *NC Department of Human Resources.*

County Data Chart

All definitions and sources for the County Data Table on pages 22 and 23 are the same. Exception: Student dropout rates are based on dropouts in grades nine through 12.

National Data

National data and rankings were provided by KIDS COUNT Databook, State Profiles of Child Well-being, Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1994.

1994

FIVE YEAR TRENDS

	INDEX					% CHANGE	
	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94	'93/94	'90/94
Health							
• Infant Mortality per 1,000	12.6	11.5	10.6	10.9	9.9	-9.2%	-21.4%
• % Low Birth Weight	8%	8.1%	8.0%	8.4%	8.4%	0%	5%
• % Births to Single Teens	10.1%	10.8%	10.9%	11.1%	10.7%	-3.6%	5.9%
• Children Without Health Insurance	13.7%	14.2%	12.3%	13.5%	17.3%	28.1%	26.3%
Education							
• Ninth Graders Who Graduate	68.5%	66.2%	67.2%	67.0%	65.6%	-2.1%	-4.2%
• High School Dropout Rate	6.66	6.36	5.57	2.77	3.06	10.5%	-54.1%
• SAT Scores	836	841	844	855	859	0.5%	2.8%
Safety							
• Children Reported Abused/Neglected	45,949	52,928	71,164	76,616	94,475	23.3%	105.6%
• Children in Out-Of-Home Placement	3,484	3,649	5,089	5,469	5,806	6.2%	66.6%
• Juvenile Arrest Rate per 1,000	8.25	8.32	9.09	9.02	9.70	7.5%	17.6%
• Training School Commitments	967	810	909	887	832	-6.2%	-14.0%
• Child Deaths	2,142	2,088	1,944	1,983	1,883	-5.0%	-12.1%
Security							
• Children Living in Poverty	266,000	235,000	275,517	NA	320,101	NA	20.3%
• Median Family Income	$28,155	$31,149	$31,343	NA	$35,200	NA	25.0%
• Children Receiving AFDC	133,653	146,292	172,539	200,700	220,835	10%	65.2%
• Child Support Collections*	$231.3	$251.2	$280.3	$321.5	$347.1	8%	50.1%

NA = Not Available

Notes: Year to year comparisons are not absolute because different points in time were used.
See glossary/sources for complete information on data definitions.
* in millions

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Children's Index

A Profile of Leading Indicators on the Health & Well-Being of North Carolina's Children.

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